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Joseph Wright, PORTRAIT OF GENERAL GILES, ca. 1785, oil on canvas.
29 5/8 x 25 1/8 in. (75.2 x 63.9 cm.)

National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution
Gift of Mrs. David C. Acheson and John W. Castles II

Sequential page 949

MACHIN'S MILLS

Gary A. Trudgen

JAMES GILES -- MACHIN'S MILLS PARTNER

The state coinage operation known today as Machin's Mills was formed on April 18, 1787. The firm consisted of six partners, and their coinage operation took place on the eastern shore of Orange Lake, near Newburgh, New York. (CNL, pages 861-883). One of the six partners was James Giles (pronounced Jiles), a young lawyer who was at the time practicing law in New York City.

Throughout his life, James Giles was involved in many different business and personal activities. Interestingly, he was connected with three separate early American money episodes. Chronologically: he was a partner in the Machin's Mills state coinage operation; he had his portrait painted by Joseph Wright (appendix) who is acknowledged as the first die engraver of the United States mint; and he was president of an early bank that issued currency bearing his signature.

The portrait of James Giles by Joseph Wright is shown on the frontispiece of this issue. This painting, along with a companion portrait of Giles' wife, Hannah, is dated circa 1785 by the National Museum of American Art. In the portrait Giles is shown wearing, on his lapel, the medal issued by the Society of the Cincinnati to its members in May 1784. Thus, it is likely that the portrait was done during the period between April 1786 and 1788 while both sitter and artist were in New York City. This would place Giles in his late twenties when he sat for Wright's portrait.

James Giles was born in New York City on March 8, 1759. Both of his parents were from England. While Giles was still an infant, his father returned to England to be ordained as a minister of the Episcopal Church and on his return to America he was shipwrecked at the entrance to Delaware Bay, and he perished. The body was said to have been buried in an old graveyard in New England Town of Cape May County, New Jersey; however, his son James was never able to identify the place where his father was interred. Today New England Town has been washed away by the Atlantic Ocean.

Young Giles studied law under Benjamin Holme in New York City from September 1771 to January 1776. Apparently the beginnings of the American Revolution interrupted his study of law because near the end of the war, he again studied law prior to obtaining his law license.

With the outbreak of the Revolutionary War Giles chose the patriot side and entered the Continental Army. The information that I have accumulated on his career is somewhat contradictory; however, it appears that he entered the war in 1778 as a Commissary of Military Stores to the Artillery. He was dissatisfied with this service as

shown by the following transcript of a letter he wrote to Colonel John Lamb of the Second New York Regiment of Continental Artillery.

Danbury, Sept. 25th -1778-

Sir,

I wou'd esteem it as a particular favor, if you'd be pleased to inform me whether there is a probability of my being appointed in your Regiment, and how soon, as the Department I'm in grows more and more disagreeable to me every Day - my reasons for leaving it you well know Sir, therefore wish (when a Lieusure hour will permit) you'd please write me, what I may depend on, which will greatly add to the obligations already confer'd on

Sir

Your very humble Servt
James Giles

Colonel Lamb

Giles' transfer into Lamb's Regiment finally took place on July 21, 1779. There he was appointed a second lieutenant in Captain George Fleming's Company. In 1780 he was attached to the command of the Marquis de Lafayette in Virginia. At that time Lafayette had just returned from France bringing with him a large supply of equipment for his officers and enlisted men. Giles received a sword from Lafayette. On January 1, 1781 Giles was appointed as adjutant of the Second New York Regiment of Continental Artillery. He was probably present in October 1781 at the siege of Yorktown, Virginia, the American victory that decided the outcome of the war.

Giles resigned from the Army on August 21, 1782 and again studied law as an indentured clerk to Joseph Bloomfield of Trenton, New Jersey. Bloomfield became Attorney General of the State of New Jersey from 1783 to 1792 and eventually became Governor of the state from 1801 to 1812. James Giles became a licensed attorney of the State of New Jersey on September 3, 1783. Likewise, on February 5, 1784, he was licensed as a lawyer in the courts of New York and took up residence at Maiden Lane in New York City.

James Giles fell in love with Joseph Bloomfield's sister, Hannah, and they were married on May 23, 1784. Hanna Bloomfield had been born on January 12, 1763 and was 21 years old when she married Giles. The father of Joseph and Hannah was Dr. Moses Bloomfield of Woodbridge, New Jersey; he had been born on December 4, 1729 and died on August 14, 1791.

Hanna was a very beautiful lady. It is said that she was also very intelligent and that she was a dedicated member of the Presbyterian Church. The following photos of James and Hanna Giles were taken from small two-inch-diameter prints. The prints are apparently copies from miniature portraits which were done by the French artist St. Memin. I estimate that these portraits were painted near the turn of the nineteenth century showing Hanna in her mid to late thirties and James in his early forties.

**JAMES GILES****HANNA GILES**

Courtesy of the Cumberland County Historical Society

James and Hanna were the parents of several children. They had one son who died in infancy, three daughters who died during childhood, and six daughters who lived to be adults.

Giles became a partner in Thomas Machin's coinage firm when it was organized on April 18, 1787. His initial responsibilities were to be the cashier and bookkeeper of the firm. After their company merged with Reuben Harmon's Vermont coinage firm on June 7, 1787, his responsibilities were to keep the books for the copartnership and to also keep a "Book of Resolutions." The "Book of Resolutions" contained a list of regulations that were established by a majority of the copartners and which governed the merged firms.

While living in New York City Giles became deeply involved with the Masonic order. He served as secretary of the Grand Lodge of New York and was also master of St. John's Lodge #2 under the jurisdiction of New York.

In 1788 Giles moved his family from New York City to Bridgeton, New Jersey. I have been unable to determine the month and day of his move. This move probably signals the beginning of the breakup of

Machin's coinage operation. Perhaps Giles moved to Bridgeton after their coinage operation was doomed by New York State's ratification of the Federal Constitution on July 26, 1788. As a lawyer, Giles would have been very aware of the impact that the adoption of the Federal Constitution would have on their coinage firm. The new Federal Constitution prohibited state coinages!

After Giles moved to Bridgeton he practiced law. It is said that he had a "large and lucrative business." Judge Daniel Elmer, who studied law under Giles via a clerkship and received his attorney license in 1805, says this about Giles: "He was a well-read lawyer and safe counsellor; but it cannot be said that he was distinguished as an advocate. He was a small man, precise in his dress and remarkably erect and graceful, but very slow in his movements and in all that he did. At the circuits he was one of the most genial and delightful companions. The legal documents he drew were marked by great exactness and precision."

On July 4, 1789 Giles associated with the New Jersey State Society of the Cincinnati. He was a charter member of the Society formed in 1783 by the officers who fought in the Revolutionary War. Later in November of the same year Giles was appointed by the New Jersey Legislature as Clerk of Cumberland County. He was twice reappointed to this office, which he held until 1804.

In 1790 Giles, along with five other Masons, petitioned John N. Cummings, acting Grand Master of the State of New Jersey, for a dispensation to be granted to James Giles to open a Masonic lodge. It was granted on October 28, 1790 appointing Giles as Master. The first meeting was held on November 15, 1790, and the lodge was named Brearley Lodge #9 (now #2) in honor of the late Justice David Brearley, the first Grand Master of the State of New Jersey. Giles' address given on December 27, 1791 at the first anniversary of the lodge has been preserved.

In 1791 he built a home on Broad Street in Bridgeton in which he lived until his death. For many years his home was the finest residence in Bridgeton. Over the years the building has been well maintained and it is considered one of the finest examples of Early Georgian Architecture in the United States. Blueprints of the house are recorded in the Congressional Library in Washington, D.C. The house has recently been converted into a bed and breakfast inn (named the Bridgetonian) and has retained its original form except for the kitchen.



JAMES GILES' HOUSE IN BRIDGETON, NEW JERSEY

In 1793 Giles was commissioned Brigadier General of the Cumberland Brigade Militia. He held this position until 1805 when he resigned his commission after being passed over for promotion. Instead of Giles a junior officer was appointed major general of the division. It is believed that this occurred because of Giles' political affiliation. Giles was a member of the Federal Party which had fallen into disfavor following the election of Thomas Jefferson in 1801. Jefferson was the leader of the Republican Party.

In company with John M. White and Jeremiah Buck, Giles speculated in real estate in 1803. They purchased from the heirs of William Penn what was known as the Penn Lands, 17,000 acres in Cumberland County, New Jersey. This involved him in considerable litigation because of trespassers on this land.

In 1805 Giles' friends confidently expected him to be appointed as the fourth justice of the New Jersey Supreme Court even though a majority of the joint meeting of the legislature was politically opposed to him. Nothing came of this, however, because a law was passed which reduced the number of justices to three.

In 1816 the Cumberland Bank of Bridgeton was formed to serve Cumberland, Salem, and Cape May Counties, and parts of Gloucester County. The chief industries of this sparsely settled territory were farming, cordwood and timber, and the manufacture of iron from native bog ore. Money was scarce and trade was being accomplished largely by barter.

There was some internal disagreement about where the bank building should be located. Jonathan Elmer, a director and future first president of the bank, resigned on August 31, 1816 because of this disagreement. James Giles was elected as a director in place of Elmer and on September 9, 1816 he was also selected to be president of the bank. Giles was a director and president of the bank for the remainder of his life. During this time the bank issued its own currency which was signed by James Giles, as president.



FIFTY DOLLAR CUMBERLAND BANK NOTE

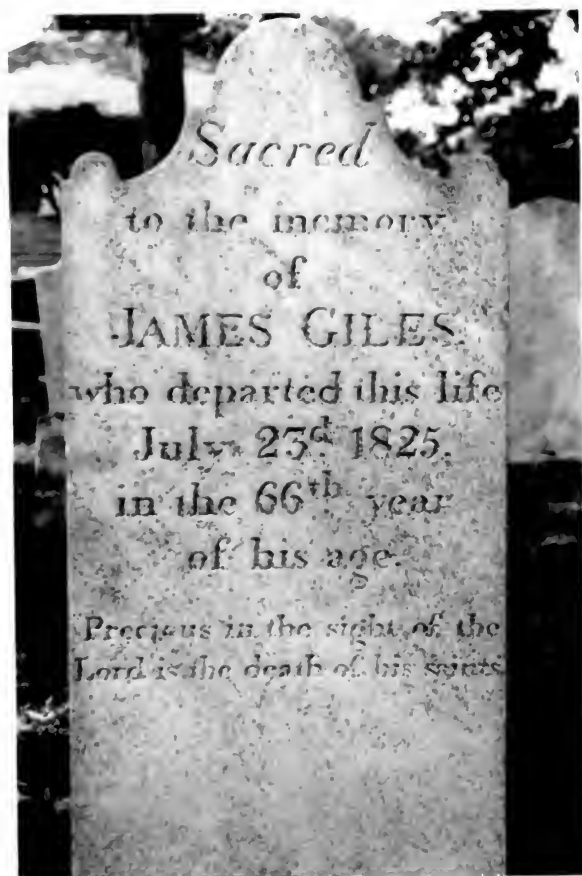
Courtesy of the Cumberland National Bank

In 1824 the Marquis de Lafayette was received by the Society of the Cincinnati of New Jersey. It is said the "Lafayette greeted Giles with great cordiality and perfectly remembered him." Giles had the sword that Lafayette had given him in 1780 handsomely remounted to wear for the occasion.

On July 30, 1825 The Washington Whig, a weekly newspaper of Bridgeton, carried James Giles obituary. In part, it read:

"It is our painful duty to record the death of another of the patriots of the revolution and one of our most worthy and enlightened citizens. On the morning of the 23rd instant departed this life GENERAL JAMES GILES in the 66th year of his age. His remains were interred in the Presbyterian burial ground of Bridgeton. The funeral took place on Sunday morning of the 24th instant at 9 A.M. and was attended by a very large concourse of inhabitants of the town and adjacent country, sincerely deploring his loss. An impressive funeral discourse was delivered by the Rev. B. Hoff to a very large, attentive and afflicted congregation from AMOS, IV chapter, and 12th verse, "Prepare to meet thy God."

His wife, Hanna, had died before him on December 21, 1823.



JAMES GILES' GRAVE MARKER

APPENDIX

JOSEPH WRIGHT, JR.

Joseph Wright was an accomplished portrait painter, sculptor, and die engraver. During his short life he knew many of the notable people of the day - Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, and others.

He was born on July 16, 1756 in Bordentown, New Jersey, 28 miles north of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the son of Joseph and Patience Wright. The senior Wright was a well-to-do cooper who died in May of 1769. Patience Wright, after her husband's death, became famous for her artistic works in wax. She died in London on February 25, 1786.

Joseph Junior began his studies of art in April 1775 at the Royal Academy of Arts in London. In late 1781 he left London for France where he met and painted Benjamin Franklin. His painting of Franklin was not from life but rather from a pastel done by the French artist Joseph Siffred Duplessis. He returned to America in the autumn of 1782. In 1783 the Continental Congress commissioned him to make a bust of General George Washington. Therefore, in the autumn of 1783, at Washington's Headquarters in Rocky Hill, New Jersey, he painted a small life study of the General and also did a plaster life mask - the first ever made. In April 1786 he moved from Philadelphia to New York City. While living in New York City he married his landlady's daughter, Sarah Vandervoort, on December 5, 1789. He returned to Philadelphia sometime before September 1791. Here he was commissioned to engrave dies for the new United States mint. He is generally acknowledged as the first engraver of the mint although there is some question whether he was ever officially appointed to the post. He engraved dies for the Henry Lee Medal, the 1792 pattern quarter dollar, and is credited with the Liberty Cap device punch that was used to make a few of the 1793 and 1794 U.S. cent obverse dies.

Wright died on September 13, 1793 at the age of 37, from yellow fever. The fever had been brought to Philadelphia by refugees from the French colony of Saint-Dominique. Joseph Wright's wife Sarah also died of this plague. Three small children survived them and are believed to have been taken in by relatives in Bordentown, New Jersey.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author is indebted to Mr. Carl West of the Cumberland County Historical Society for his gracious cooperation and assistance in my quest for information on James Giles. Special thanks are also due Mr. Monroe Fabian, Curator, Department of Painting and Sculpture, of the National Portrait Gallery and Mr. George Waddington, Executive Vice President of the Cumberland National Bank.

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DISCOVERY of a new ATLEE HALFPENCE**(TN-108)****● Comments by ye Editor****NEW ATLEE HALFPENCE
Vlack 13-88VTA****Photograph enlarged 2X**

A new Atlee Halfpence has been discovered by CNL Patron Ron Guth in the National Numismatic Collection of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. The specimen which was misattributed as a Vermont Ryder 31 is actually a muling of two previously known dies. The obverse is from an American made George III die made by James Atlee and known as Vlack 13, and the reverse is from another Atlee die, the 1788 INDE ETLIB Vermont reverse known as Bressett L. Die juxtaposition is normal $\uparrow \downarrow$ and the specimen weight is 7.383 grams (113.92 grains). It has not been possible to make a positive determination as to whether a shearing or cutting type planchet punch was employed in the manufacture of the planchet; in some places the edge appears to be cut, and in others sheared.

In which series to place this specimen depends upon one's point of view! If one considers it to be a Vermont specimen, then it should probably be designated as Ryder 40, the next open number. On the other hand it could also be designated as Vlack 13-88VTA recognizing it as an American made George III counterfeit halfpence from dies manufactured by Atlee and struck during his tenure at Machin's Mills. It is the opinion of ye Editor that the latter designation is the more appropriate.

Our sincere thanks to Mrs. Cory Gilliland, Curator, National Numismatic Collections, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution for providing the photographs and for the background information regarding the discovery of this specimen and for the details of its physical characteristics.

DISCOVERY of a third Noe I-D NE SHILLING**(TN-109)****Photograph received from Q. David Bowers****● Comments by ye Editor & Michael J. Hodder****THIRD KNOWN SPECIMEN****Noe I-D****Photograph enlarged 2X**

The third known specimen of Noe I-D NE Shilling is scheduled for auction as Lot 654 in the September 8, 1986 sale by Bowers & Merena.

The two previously known Noe I-D specimens appeared in Stack's May 26, 1976 auction of the Laird U. Park collection (Lot 2) and in the Bowers & Ruddy Galleries October 1-2, 1980 auction, Part 3, of The Johns Hopkins University Garrett Collection (Lot 1200). Both coins are plated in those catalogs.

This third specimen is from "an ex-southern collection stored in a bank vault since before 1946." Its weight is 64.6 grains and it measures 29.7 mm on the long axis and 25.5 mm on the short axis. The photograph is a 2x enlargement. There are two very interesting technical effects exhibited by this particular specimen. First is the very obvious diagonal splitting of the planchet when the NE punch was applied with great force; the second is a totally unexpected tool mark which can be seen on the obverse from the 4:00 position around to the 9:00 position, and again at the 12:00 position. This is exactly the type of marking, usually accompanied by a slight bevel (or taper) on the opposite side, produced by a poorly fitting punch within the bed of a telescoping planchet cutter ("cookie cutter") known to have been used for the Early American Coppers of the Confederation period. (See CNL pages 788-798, especially the first and third photographs on page 795). It appears that we have here almost indisputable evidence that a cutting machine of the screwpress type was used to produce some of the planchets for the NE Shillings!

Ye Editor discussed these ideas with Michael Hodder at Bowers & Merena and learned that Mike had reached the identical conclusions regarding the cutter marks but had omitted this when he wrote the catalog description of the specimen to avoid including within a factual description material which might be considered controversial and elected, instead, to simply state that the effect is "presently unexplained."

Hodder also pointed out that another NE specimen, a Noe 1-A, having similar markings (this time on the reverse) appears as Lot 3 in Dana Linnett's "Buy or Bid" Sale #2. Mike stated that "I have not traced another specimen exhibiting the same feature and would not care to speculate about its absence elsewhere (it suggests technical improvement and contemporaneity for 1-A and 1-D, or trimming after cutting or striking)".

Subsequently, ye Editor searched other photographic plates and found some slight suggestion of cutter marks on Noe's NE Sixpence (specimen 3, plate II); NE Shilling (specimen 6, plate I); and a Willow Tree Sixpence (specimen 9, plate VII). Let me very quickly point out, however, that photographs can be extremely deceiving and that careful visual inspection of the coins themselves is necessary in order to reach a reasonably correct conclusion. Accordingly, our Patrons are encouraged to carefully examine ALL their Massachusetts Silver specimens for other evidence and to report it to ye Editor for transmission to our Patrons.

During 1985 Anne Picker graciously donated to the Foundation many of the photographic reference materials and plates which Richard Picker had accumulated over the years. Within this group are original photographic (fulltone) prints of Massachusetts Silver from the Garrett, Ryder, Wurtzbach and Jenks collections. A quick review of these prints revealed no additional specimens showing the markings cited above; however, there was one significant discovery and this is that several specimens which had obviously been clipped with a straight cut, probably with hand shears, showed an effect as though the pin holding the two sections of the shear together was not tight and had allowed the cutting blades to spread slightly apart. The result was a similar, except straight, marking on the specimen! (Keep in mind that the "cookie cutter" blade configuration is exactly the same as a hand shears, or scissors blade, except circular.) So perhaps Michael Hodder's observation that the effect is "presently unexplained" is more correct than he has imagined! The question remaining is whether the markings that appear to have been caused by a "cookie cutter" planchet punch were caused, instead, by a hand shears? Additional study and careful inspection of specimens is obviously necessary.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

Photograph by Cathy Dumont and technical information from Michael Hodder (both of Bowers and Merena Galleries).

OBSERVATIONS on the 1714 GLOUCESTER SHILLING (TN-110)
● from Donald G. Partrick; Central Islip, NY

Just when I thought The Colonial Newsletter had become too erudite and too engrossed in nit-picking research then an article comes along that hits me like a sledge hammer. I take back all those nit-picking, erudite bad thoughts I have had and wish to praise Ray Williamson's article on "Virginia's Early Money of Account".

Of particular interest to me was the chapter on "Tobacco as Legal-Tender Money". While it has always been generally known that tobacco played a major part in trade throughout the colonies, this extensive chapter really comes through with so many salient facts emphasizing that tobacco had indeed been put in a special category for a long-term part as a money instrument. Also the author's personal and documented observations of the British shilling-pound system in our early American economy is well presented.

All of this leads me to make some observations of an early American coin. I refer to the 1714 Gloucester Shilling. Only recently, with the appearance of the second known specimen, has true attribution of the shilling been documented.



1714 GLOUCESTER SHILLING
The Roper/Garrett Specimen

Photograph enlarged 2X

Obverse: A building in the center with the denomination XII (12 pence equal to one shilling) directly under. Surrounding on the outer edge of the coin: GLOUCESTER COVRTHOVSE VIRGINIA

Reverse: A five pointed star surrounded by:
RICHAVLT . DAWSON . ANNO . DOM . 1714.

Whether this is a token or a coin becomes a speculation. The words "coin" and "token" are often used interchangeably and loosely. Technically "coin" means made by the government as legal tender. A "token" can be made by anyone and passes as substitute legal tender or

coinage subject only to the acceptance or rejection of those who transact in trade. Up until now I would have been reasonably certain that this was a token issued by a particular commodity house specializing in tobacco. Since tobacco played such a large part in trade in Virginia and since this is a Virginia token, speculation can now be entertained as to further origins of this particular token. My leaning is still to the idea that it was, in fact, a token of trade, but since Ray Williamson makes such a documented record of the importance of tobacco in Virginia I bring the question, could this token have been authorized by government, town, county, or state? I never considered this approach until this article with its emphasis on tobacco as the government's primary commodity as a hard money substitute. If, in fact, such evidence ever does come to life, then the token becomes a coin, a "coin of the realm". if you will. Substitute coinage (for the commodity).

No matter what future numismatic research reveals, the 1714 Virginia Gloucester token has established itself as an original instrument of (legal?) tender manufactured in Virginia. That alone makes it of tremendous historical significance. The obverse with the county courthouse shown thereon leads credence to a more than speculative question as to its possible governmental origin. The courthouse (a public building?) might foster the "coin" premise. The personalization "Righavlt . Dawson" does not seem congruent with a "coin" interpretation on first appraisal. But if further research revealed that Righavalt Dawson might have been a major public figure, governmental or otherwise, rather than a prominent merchant with his name on his token; we might be very much surprised.

I freely agree that this suggestion is only embryonic in scope and may, in fact, prove completely specious. Better numismatic students than I will continue to research this area. My suggestion is for further encouragement and possible illumination in that field of research.

